

## RULES OF THUMB

### TESTS FOR NOUNS

#### FORMAL PROOF

1. Has noun-making morpheme
2. Can occur with the plural morpheme or can be made plural
3. Can occur with the possessive morpheme

#### FUNCTIONAL PROOF

4. Without modifiers, can directly follow an article and create a grammatical unit.
5. Can fit the frame sentence: (The)\_\_\_\_\_ seem(s) all right.

(A noun *must* fit the frame sentence and have at least one of the characteristics above.)

### TESTS FOR VERBS

#### FORMAL PROOF

1. Has verb-making morpheme
2. Can occur with verb present-tense morpheme
3. Can occur with verb past-tense morpheme
4. Can occur with present-participle morpheme
5. Can occur with past-participle morpheme

#### FUNCTIONAL PROOF

6. Can be made into a command
7. Can be made negative
8. Can fit in one of the frame sentences: They must \_\_\_\_\_ (it).  
They must \_\_\_\_\_ good.

(To be a verb, a word *must* have one or more of the qualities listed above.)

## TESTS FOR ADJECTIVES

### FORMAL PROOF

1. Has adjective-making morpheme
- 2a. Takes comparative or superlative morpheme

### FUNCTIONAL PROOF

- 2b. Can be made comparative or superlative by using *more* or *most*
3. Can be qualified
4. Can fit both slots of the frame sentence: The \_\_\_\_\_ man (or other noun) seems very \_\_\_\_\_.

(Any word that has an adjective making morpheme or can fit in both slots of the frame sentence must be an adjective.)

## TESTS FOR ADVERBS

### FORMAL PROOF:

1. Has adverb-making morpheme
- 2a. Takes comparative or superlative morpheme

### FUNCTIONAL PROOF

- 2b. Can be made comparative or superlative by using *more* or *most*
3. Can be qualified
4. Can be moved within a sentence
5. Can fit the frame sentence: The man told his story \_\_\_\_\_.

(Because of the complexity of adverbs as a class, no single criterion listed above works for every single adverb.)

Source: Klammer, Schulz, and Volpe, *Analyzing English Grammar*, seventh edition.